DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 422 078 PS 026 721

TITLE	Hitting the Mark: A Resource Guide and Checklist for Enhancing Early Childhood Care and Education.
INSTITUTION	Child Day Care Association of St. Louis, MO.
PUB DATE	1995-00-00
NOTE	6p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Check Lists; *Child Caregivers; Child Development; Classroom Environment; Curriculum Development; Day Care; Early Childhood Education; Educational Objectives; *Educational Principles; Family Involvement; *Knowledge Base for Teaching; *Professional Development; Standards; *Teaching Skills

ABSTRACT

Reflecting some of the most up-to-date thinking about enriching the experience of those who plan for and are involved in the care of children, this brochure lists critical skills of those individuals in the child care profession, and may be used as a reminder and as a self-evaluation tool. The skills highlighted are: enhancing child development; contributing to developmentally appropriate curriculum; supporting and encouraging family involvement; promoting a healthy and safe environment; supporting cultural and individual diversity; providing guidance in developing relationships; using observation and assessment; and maintaining standards of professionalism. Each targeted skill area includes a detailed checklist of relevant skills. (JPB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 422 078

Hitting the Mark

A Resource Guide and Checklist for Enhancing Early Childhood Care and Education

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Andra Schleicher

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

PS 026721

Target: Support Cultural And Individual Diversity

Supports the uniqueness of each child, recognizing that children are best understood within the larger picture of their family, culture, and society.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Uses communication with parents that encourages respect for diversity at home and in the program.
- ❑ Respects each family's values and expectations about care.
- ❑ Understands that different cultural groups may have different expectations for boys and girls and their roles in society.
- ❑ Acknowledges and supports children's diversity with regard to socioeconomic status, physical, mental, and emotional abilities.
- ❑ Takes positive steps to help children learn and appreciate, at their own level, the history and symbolism of religions, cultures, and the diverse ethnic groups in our society.
- ❑ Makes ongoing efforts to learn more about diverse cultures through available community resources.
- ❑ Recognizes that each child care setting has its own character and quality, and respects that unique quality.

Target: Provide Guidance in Developing Relationships

Helps children learn to manage their own behavior and develop respectful cooperative relationships with others.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Demonstrates mutual respect, caring, warmth and positive communication in interactions with children, parents, and co-workers.
- ❑ Aware that a rich, stimulating environment is the basis for effective classroom management.
- ❑ Promotes trusting and stable relationships with children through both verbal and non-verbal communication, such as good eye contact, kneeling-sitting at their level, listening carefully, respecting their time to speak, responding to their affection.
- ❑ Understands that outside events and interactions affect children's behavior in the child care setting.
- ❑ Sets and communicates limits for acceptable behavior and helps children feel safe.
- ❑ Understands the difference between discipline and punishment.
- ❑ Develops and maintains skills to help children develop self-control.
- ❑ Facilitates conflict resolution among children and among co-workers.
- ❑ Uses different strategies to respond to the unique needs of each child.
- ❑ Has clear expectations of appropriate behaviors at different age levels.

Target: Support and Encourage Family Involvement

Respects parents and other family members, makes them feel welcome, and encourages them to participate in the program.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Offers parents a variety of ways to be involved.
- ❑ Understands and shows empathy for the stresses and needs of working parents, and of different family structures.
- ❑ Communicates in a non-judgmental way with parents and other involved adults.
- ❑ Maintains regular contact with parents-families through a variety of formats.
- ❑ Demonstrates sensitivity to alternative life styles.
- ❑ Understands stresses on families such as finances, adequate housing, child care support, etc.
- ❑ Understands pressure on those caring for children and older adults.
- ❑ Able to translate child development theories and ideas into language families can understand and use.
- ❑ Respects the different roles played by parents, teachers, and others in a child's life.
- ❑ Empowers parents by respecting and including their insight about the child's behavior and feelings.
- ❑ Works in partnership with parents to support the child's health and growth.

Target: Promote a Healthy And Safe Environment

Establishes and maintains a safe and orderly child care setting with varied stimulating toys and materials that are age-appropriate.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Knows the nutritional needs of young children.
- ❑ Recognizes and makes accommodations for the safe transportation of children.
- ❑ Knows signs of child neglect and abuse and reports suspected cases to the proper authorities.
- ❑ Understands and implements the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- ❑ Has a basic knowledge of minimum health, safety, and sanitation standards both indoors and outdoors.
- ❑ Has general knowledge of CPR and First Aid.
- ❑ Maintains a safe environment in all areas of the early childhood setting.
- ❑ Aware of signs and symptoms of childhood illness and disease.
- ❑ Maintains procedures for recording accidents and illness.
- ❑ Knows legal liabilities of caregivers-teachers.

The St. Louis Regional Child Care Partnership, Inc. was established in 1991 to improve the quality, affordability, and accessibility of child care in the St. Louis community.

This unique public-private forum includes employers, child care providers, government officials, early childhood professionals, public school educators, health experts, religious and civic leaders, child advocates, and parents.

The Partnership functions as a vehicle for the study and analysis of child care issues, dissemination of information, development of cooperative ventures, and appropriate advocacy to improve child care in our community.

For more information, contact:
Corinne Patton
Executive Director
St. Louis Regional Child Care Partnership
2031 Olive Street
St. Louis, MO 63103
(314) 436-2010

Quality Caregiver-Teacher Checklist

Target: Enhance Child Development

Understands components in child development and applies this knowledge in working with children.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Aware of differences in temperament resulting in flexibility in the classroom environment.
- ❑ Recognizes children's different personalities.
- ❑ Understands and accepts cultural differences and their effect on children's behavior and development.
- ❑ Aware of the requirements of children with special needs, able to network with other professionals to understand unique needs of each child and translate into effective interactions.
- ❑ Able to adapt to children's changing needs as they grow.
- ❑ Recognizes developmental milestones and identifies developmental delays.

Target: Contribute to Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

Plans and implements developmentally appropriate activities that advance all areas of children's development and learning, including social, emotional, intellectual, and physical.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Creates an environment that stimulates intellectual, physical, and emotional growth according to the ability of each child.
- ❑ Supports children in developing appropriate language and communication skills.
- ❑ Demonstrates an understanding of the value of play and the teacher's role in facilitating and enriching such play.
- ❑ Uses open-ended questions to stimulate children's self-expression and thinking, and to support peer learning.
- ❑ Sensitive to group and individual needs and interests when making curriculum choices.
- ❑ Aware of own personal biases and attempts to compensate for them.
- ❑ Aware of different learning styles and adapts curriculum to these styles.
- ❑ Plans a curriculum adapted for the child with special needs.
- ❑ Familiar with and uses a wide variety of multicultural community resources and children's literature to enrich the child's environment. Includes activities throughout the year that present accurate information about the diverse cultures in which children live.

This brochure reflects some of the most up-to-date thinking about what it takes to enrich the experience of those who plan for and are involved in the care of children. It was developed with three audiences in mind:

- caregivers-teachers
- parents
- educators and trainers

Regardless of your role in child care, this is an area of vital concern to us all. Research and actual involvement with children are constantly adding to our knowledge and level of awareness.

We invite you to use this checklist as a reminder of some critical skills and as a self-evaluation tool. Use it to determine how close you are to hitting the mark in your target of achieving the best possible child care. The target areas are not listed in any particular order. Each one is important to quality care and education.

Caregivers-Teachers

Contrary to popular wisdom, effective caregiver-teachers are made, not born. Quality caregiver-teachers grow and develop over time, based on a combination of

- life experiences
- formal instructions and
- the process of actually caring for and teaching children.

The effective, high-quality caregiver-teacher is a work in progress, continually engaged in learning and applying new knowledge. The question is not whether an approach is right or wrong, but how close it comes to hitting the mark. This is true for those teachers employed in centers, homes, private, public, profit or not-for-profit organizations.

Caregiver-teachers can use this checklist to assess their own competencies and to tailor their professional development. The results of the assessment will indicate areas to strengthen. Teachers can then look for training or educational opportunities that meet their own professional needs.

Program administrators and directors can use the checklist as a general assessment tool for an entire program and to formulate professional development plans for individual staff.

Parents and Other Family Members

This brochure is meant to offer key considerations to keep in mind when selecting the best care for your child. It outlines the target goals and an accompanying checklist of what it takes to "hit the mark" in the goal of excellent child care. By keeping these in mind, parents may be better prepared as they look for the best program for their child.

Educators and Trainers

Educational institutions can use this checklist in evaluating class offerings for early childhood degree programs.

Training agencies can use this as a reference when planning workshops and seminars that will support specific skill and competency areas for all levels of professional development.

Target: Use Observation & Assessment

Observes and records children's behavior and uses what is learned to plan and individualize teaching practices and curriculum.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Considers children's interactions and relationships in a variety of settings.
- ❑ Observes and records children's actions, interactions, and skill levels in a descriptive, non-judgmental way.
- ❑ Bases assessment on observation and understanding of child development theories.
- ❑ Uses both observation techniques and prepared assessment tools to plan curriculum.
- ❑ Bases assessment on continual child observations and on appropriate expectations for each age level.
- ❑ Maintains an organized system for collecting and maintaining observational records.
- ❑ Has a specific plan for transmitting observation information, records, and files to parents and other authorized persons.
- ❑ Uses assessments in planning for the individual child and for the group.
- ❑ Uses observation to determine effective and appropriate strategies for guiding the behavior of individual children.
- ❑ Maintains confidentiality with regard to observations, assessments, and records.

Target: Maintain High Standards of Professionalism

Participates in early childhood professional organizations and keeps abreast of current literature.

Hitting the Mark

- ❑ Exhibits an interest in learning more about the specific age group for whom care is provided.
- ❑ Demonstrates an awareness of ethical issues in the decision-making process and in the priorities that are set.
- ❑ Actively advocates for children's issues and for the early childhood profession as a whole.
- ❑ Joins professional early childhood organization and/or early childhood interest groups.
- ❑ Networks with fellow professionals at workshops, conferences, presentations.
- ❑ Observes strict confidentiality regarding children, families, staff, co-workers.
- ❑ Models professional behaviors at all times in the workplace.
- ❑ Considers education an ongoing, life-long process.
- ❑ Takes part in continuing education opportunities.
- ❑ Continues to monitor and evaluate own actions and interactions.

Adapted from "Of Ladders and Lattices, Cores and Cones: Conceptualizing an Early Childhood Professional Developmental Development System," by S. Bredekamp and B. Willer, 1992, Young Children 47(3), pp. 47-50.
Copyright ©1992 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Used by permission.

ENDORSERS

Missouri Board for Voluntary Accreditation

Children's Home & Aid Society of Illinois
Resource and Referral Program

Child Day Care Association

Black Child Development Institute,
St. Louis Affiliate

St. Louis Community College District/Child
Care Programs

Missouri Home Child Care Providers
Association

Human Development Corporation Head Start

St. Louis Regional Coalition for African
Centered Education

University of Missouri – St. Louis
Department of Social Work

YMCA of Greater St. Louis

St. Louis Association for the Education
of Young Children

Southwestern Illinois Association for the
Education of Young Children

YWCA of Metropolitan St. Louis Child
Care Division

Missouri School Age Child Care Coalition

School District of University City

Parents As Teachers National Center